1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

Islands of Malekula there are only two forms of currency, pigs and mats. The mats in question are a special kind called *mangau*[1] (see Plate VI), henceforth referred to as money-mats, made of long strips of plaited material 6 to 8 inches wide, dyed red on a yellow base, with very long fringes on either side. Each mat is rolled up tightly, tied round with a strip of coconut husk, and normally kept hanging in the owner's house, with the long fringes hanging loose. Once rolled, they are never undone, and pass as small currency and complimentary gifts from hand to hand till the long fringes gradually become worn away and the mat finally becomes worthless and must be replaced.[2] These form the small change of native currency. The capital currency is pigs.

Pig currency is based, not on the animal's size or the state of its flesh, but exclusively on the elongation of its tusks. For this reason, sows are not used as currency. Nor is the tusk of a dead boar of any commercial value.[3] For it must be remembered that the prime value of the boar is as a sacrificial animal, and its ultimate worth rests exclusively on this fact, and on the rise in rank that a man achieves through sacrifice. As will be seen later, this rise in rank is exactly correlated with the size of the tusks of the sacrificed boar, and it is on this fact that the graded system is built up. When sacrificed, the tusked jaws of the victims are displayed on booths and otherwise hung up for the admiration of all comers and for the greater honour of the sacrificer. At a yet later stage, when the booths have been dismantled, the sacrificer may extract one of the tusks and wear it on his wrist as a memorial of his exploit. Such display, however, is merely a matter of record and personal vanity, and has no other practical object, since the boar's value as such has ceased once its main object in the eyes of the natives has been achieved, namely its sacrifice and the resulting rise in rank bestowed on the sacrificer. The whole value of the pig lies in its function as a prospective victim. For this reason, a dead boar, or its tusks, are valueless as currency. It is the live pig only that is valued, in proportion to the length of its tusks.

The reason for this, and the means by which the tusked boar is itself

[1] Equivalent to the North Raga *bwana* (Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 385). In Vao they are used also for wrapping up the dead, whence Speiser accounts for their value (see p. 542, note). These mats are quite distinct from the ordinary sleeping-mats called *betara* and the fine mats called *to-mbagha*. For the use of mats as currency elsewhere see Codrington, 3, p. 323, and Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 443.

[2] Specimens of similar money-mats from Atchin are to be seen in the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and of Ethnology, Layard Collection, Nos. 179 and 181. In that island they are called *ni-mbuen*, the same word as is used for women's mourning-caps. The material from which they are made is strips of pandanus fibre, rather coarser than that used for wearing apparel, and, like the wearing apparel, they are dyed yellow and red with conventionalised designs. No. 181, when unrolled, proved to be 9 feet long. The fringes of a good new mat will hang as much as 3 feet down on either side.

[3] Pigs' jaw-bones are, however, used as currency in the Torres Islands (Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 460).

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PLATE XVI. 1 and 2

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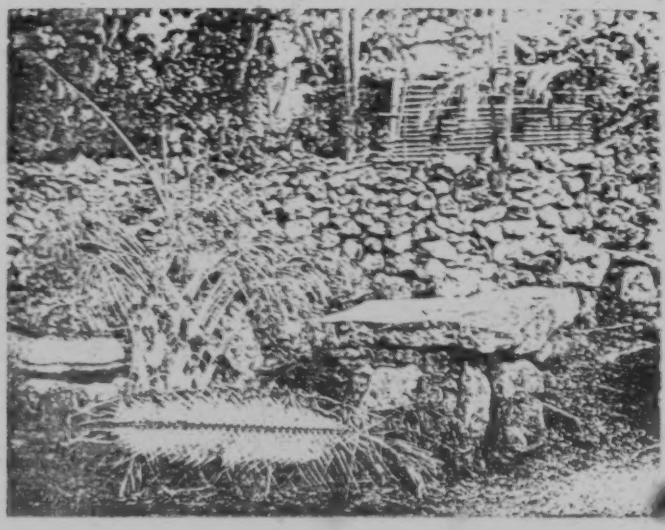

1. Large dolmen at Rere-hul. Behind is part of the stone-platform, and to the left a leaf screen and circular fence erected during the mortuary rites for an old man

2. Table-stone for a dolmen resting on the wooden sledge on which it has been hauled up from the reef. (*Speiser*, 3, *Plate* 63, *Fig.* 4)

[facing P. 365]

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1. Small coastal canoe with mat-sail. (*Speiser*, 3, *Plate* 62, *Fig.* 7)
2. Large coastal canoe. (*Speiser*, 3, *Plate* 31, *Fig.* 4)

[facing p. 460]

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
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396 a kind of bow platform is constructed of flat boards set at intervals and held on by means of a rail.[1]

Sea-going canoes.

In the sea-going canoes all these features are retained and there may be a second row of planks, or upper wash-strakes, called *romb-romb*. Structural forms by which sea-going canoes differ entirely from all types of coastal canoes, however large, are:

(*a*) The fact that sea-going canoes are symmetrically constructed with a bow-piece and figure-head at each end.
(*b*) The addition, at each end, of two subsidiary figure-heads (*mbambar*), one on each side of the main figure-head.
(*c*) The corresponding symmetry of the outrigger booms, all of which are placed close to one another amidships to allow of tacking in either direction.
(*d*) The fact that the free ends of the outrigger booms extend some distance beyond the hull on the side opposite to that of the float.
(*e*) The construction of wooden platforms (*hal avol*) on the outrigger booms on both sides of the hull.

Sails.

396 285 Coastal canoes (except the very smallest) and sea-going canoes were formerly all provided with sails, called *gha-mban* or *na-gha-mban*,[2] of which the literal meaning is "wing." In the case of the smaller coastal canoes the sail was made of leaf sheaths of coconut palm, sewn together with bast fibre. A photograph of such a sail taken by Speiser [3] is reproduced in Plate XIX. In the case of large sea-going canoes, however, for which a stronger material is needed, the sail was made formerly by sewing together long strips of plaited pandanus leaves dyed red with the same technique as is still used for the making of women's mat-skirts and men's girdles and penis-wrappers. The plaiting was done by the women, and the sail-strips were then sewn together by the men.[4] The sail, described 396 by Dr. Haddon as a simple kind of oceanic spritsail (of which the typical form was that formerly used in New Zealand),[5] was triangular with a

[1] These are the "small transverse boards like small seats" referred to by Speiser (3, p. 252, quoted by Haddon, 3, vol. II, p. 26) "which have no significance for navigation, but are merely the expression of the *suge* [misnomer for Maki] rank of the owner—the higher the rank the more the boards." They are, however, of practical use in that they may be used to support parcels of food or other paraphernalia of a voyage.

[2] Transcribed as *nagamban* in my original notes quoted by Haddon, 3, vol. II, p. 27. Compare Mota *gapan*.

[3] See also Speiser, 3, p. 251. These sails are no longer made. That seen in Plate I is a ready-made European one bought from a white trader.

[4] Codrington, 3, p. 292, describes a similar method of construction in Mota.

[5] Haddon, 3, vol. III, p. 11.